**MINUTES**
**SELECT BOARD**
**HARWICH TOWN HALL**
**732 MAIN STREET, HARWICH MA**
**MONDAY, JULY 14, 2025**
**5:15 P.M. EXECUTIVE SESSION**
**6:00 P.M. - REGULAR MEETING**

APPROVED

RELEASED

**MEMBERS PARTICIPATING**: Chair Donald Howell, Vice Chair Peter Piekarski, Clerk Mark Kelleher, Member Jeffrey Handler & Member Anita Doucette

**ALSO PARTICIPATING**: Assistant Town Administrator Meggan Eldredge & Executive Assistant Jennifer Clarke



## CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Howell called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

**Mr. Kelleher moved that the Select Board enter into Executive Session to discuss the items as outlined below, 2nd by Mr. Handler. The vote was 5-0-0 with Mr. Howell, Mr. Piekarski, Mr. Handler, Mr. Kelleher & Ms. Doucette all voting aye by roll call**

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. Pursuant to MGL c.30A section 21 (a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining for all town unions and non-union personnel and or contract negotiations with non-union personnel and the Chair has determined that open session would have a detrimental effect on the town's bargaining position
B. Pursuant to G.L. c. 30A, sec. 21(a)(2) to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel and to conduct contract negotiations with non-union personnel: Finance Director, Acting Town Administrator

Mr. Howell reported that discussion was had in executive session, but no action was taken.

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Howell invited everyone to join in the Pledge of Allegiance.

## STAFF COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Howell asked for a moment of silence for the tragic incident that happened today in Fall River.

Council on Aging Director Julie Witas was present to remind residents that the COA is still there, even in the summer. The COA publishes a newsletter every other month and asked people to call the COA if they would like to receive a copy. Over the summer, many of their standard programs are still in operation. Ms. Witas highlighted their technology classes, specifically for Android users. There are classes for Apple users, but those fill up quickly. The COA partners with Pleasant Bay Community Boating to offer some on the water excursions. Ms. Witas said that she has been before the Select Board before to talk about the COA's needs assessment, which has been a one-year process. Data collection is finished and has been analyzed and a final report is being prepared for the town. The COA will plan for a community forum in the Fall, but would like to come before the Select Board to present the information before that.

Fire Chief David LeBlanc and Police Chief Kevin Considine were present to touch base about the July 4th weekend events. They noted that even though there were a lot of people and some issues, this was a successful year, especially in Harwich Port with the restaurants doing what they were supposed to do. While the crowds were significant on sidewalks, the restaurants were managing their crowds. Some complaints were received, but public safety investigated and monitored and found no violations. Occupancy numbers were maintained as far as public safety saw and the establishments should be acknowledged for managing their crowds. It was noted that there were a lot less problems this year, but that managing this time of year is still a work in progress.

Chief Considine thanked the Select Board for having them during this comment period. He also thanked his entire staff for the work that they did during the July 4th holiday weekend. Chief Considine thanked Chief LeBlanc and his team as well. While there were challenges, he considers this weekend to have been a success. Issues have dramatically been decreased and their departments have worked with key partners in Harwich Port to get ahead of any issues. Chief Considine reported that the overtime paid for the period of July 3rd through July 6th was just over $19,000. During this time, there is a mandatory blackout period where no one on his staff can take any time off. His team has already conducted a debrief and started planning for next year. Chief Considine reviewed his staffing levels and reasoning for not being able to hire summer officers any longer. He also went over the number of calls for service including motor vehicle crashes, fireworks complaints, noise complaints and arrests. On July 4th, there were over 100 juveniles that were ubered into town. Social media was buzzing that Harwich Port was the place to be and to show up to Harwich beaches. The Police responded to the beaches and moved the juveniles to parking lots and arranged for them to be picked up. Chief Considine closed out by saying that he could not be prouder of his staff. Mr. Howell added that it is important for the public to know that not only is public safety aware of what is happening in town, but that they work very well together.

Mr. Howell reported that the Harwich Ecumenical Council for Housings Annual Walk for Love will be tomorrow, July 15th starting at 10:00 a.m. at Mooncussers Tavern on Sisson Road. He also said that the 7th annual Cape Verdean festival will be happening on Saturday, July 19th at Brooks Park beginning at 10:30 a.m.

Mr. Kelleher thanked the public safety officers that were out in town for prevention of incidents.

Mr. Kelleher reminded the public that the non-resident taxpayers meeting will be held on August 4th at the Select Board meeting.

**WEEKLY BRIEFING**

Ms. Eldredge gave the Phase 3 sewer extension update, and a two week lookahead, highlighting the areas of work. Information is available on the Town website.

Ms. Eldredge reported that she met with the Building and Facilities Manager Sean Libby yesterday regarding the Brooks Academy Museum project. A request for proposals has been drafted to go out for architectural services. The owners project manager that we just did a contract for has been working towards a time table and scope of services and will be going out to bid in the next 2-3 weeks. Once that goes out to bid, we will need to create a design services committee to review the proposals that are received from architects. In talking with Mr. Libby, we will be looking for a Select Board member, the Acting Town Administrator, Mr. Libby, a member from the museum and another member to round out the committee membership.

Ms. Eldredge informed the Select Board that she put information in Dropbox regarding the legal request for proposals that they were looking for.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

No public comment was heard.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

A. Approve the Select Board Meeting Minutes from June 30, 2025 & July 8, 2025

**Mr. Kelleher moved to approve the Select Board meeting minutes from June 30, 2025, as printed, 2nd by Mr. Piekarski and approved 4-0-1 (Doucette abstained).**

**Mr. Kelleher moved to approve the Select Board meeting minutes from July 8, 2025, as printed, 2nd by Mr. Handler and approved 4-0-1 (Piekarski abstained).**

B. Approve the resignation of Francis Crowley on the Recreation and Youth Commission effective immediately

**Mr. Kelleher moved to approve the resignation of Francis Crowley on the Recreation and Youth Commission effectively immediately, 2nd by Mr. Handler and approved 5-0-0.**

C. Vote to approve the following committee appointments as recommended by the Interview Committee:
   1. Darlene Mahoney, Cultural Council, full member, term to expire June 30, 2028
   2. Jenny Andersen, Council on Aging, full member, term to expire June 30, 2028

Mr. Handler said that it was a pleasure to interview both candidates. Ms. Doucette agreed and added that both candidates were very enthusiastic to join the committees and that both will be good additions.

**Mr. Kelleher moved to approve the appointment of Darlene Mahoney to the Cultural Council as a full member with a term to expire on June 30, 2028 and Jenny Anderson to the Council on Aging as a full member with a term to expire on June 30, 2028, 2nd by Mr. Handler and approved 5-0-0.**

**NEW BUSINESS**

A. Review/Interview Groux White Consultants, votes may be taken

Rick White, principal partner with Groux White Consultants was present.

Mr. Piekarski said that one of his biggest concerns is the window of time for this process to take place but noted that the timeline in the proposal is smaller. Mr. White responded that his firm can generally have the recruitment completed between 12-13 weeks. He added that his hope is that the Select Board will appoint a screening committee, which is a good buffer for both him and the board. The screening committee is also a great sounding board for the community.

Mr. Piekarski asked how many active searches Mr. White has going currently. Mr. White responded that they just completed Fairhaven and are about ¾ of the way through Swampscott and ½ of the way through Adams. Mr. Piekarski also asked what the last Cape Cod entity was that the firm worked with. Mr. White responded Orleans and that it was for their current Town Manager and was completed within the 13-week window. Mr. Piekarski asked how many applicants there for the Orleans position. Mr. White was unsure of the number but said that in Fairhaven, he had 36 candidates and 12 were interviewed. He added that the Cape is an unusual market and the fit for the Cape is incredibly important. The firm does their best to look at the culture of each of the communities that they are recruiting for. He added that the Cape does not have as big of a recruitment pool.

Mr. Piekarski added that housing is also an issue and is magnified on the Cape. He assumes that Mr. White stresses that with the candidates. Mr. White confirms that he does.

Mr. White said that there is a lot of pre-screening that is done before hand and about 70% of the recruits are not interested in the position and back out. His firm sells the professional opportunity and then the community. He added that real estate might not be as big of a problem. Mr. Piekarski asked what the rough percentage of people is that takes the initial interview and then uses that as leverage with their current employer. Mr. White responded that would be a violation of the ICMA code of ethics. He has a fairly strong reputation in the business and with the candidates and that he goes a long way to protect the candidate's privacy. Generally, the firm likes to present 3 or 4 finalists, and that you want to have good candidates in the reserve in case one withdraws.

Ms. Doucette asked what the mechanism for advertising the position is. Mr. White responded that he has a large network of professional colleagues that he calls on. They also send out a brochure and then does a targeted search. He calls his colleagues and asks for referrals and makes a pitch of the opportunity in Harwich, and also does a lot of cold calling. The easy part for the firm is doing the recruitment, the hard part is selling the opportunity. He referenced an 18-month guarantee of the position.

Mr. Kelleher asked if the firm is open to hiring people from outside of municipal government and if there is a potential pool of those candidates. Mr. White responded that they are open to anyone who has great qualifications. Generally, the candidates who can make the transition from state or federal government or from the private sector have some devotion to local government. Businessmen who come in from the public sector can grow impatient with the municipal process. The firm works hard to see if there is some king of connection between the person applying for the position and the interest in the job.

Mr. Kelleher asked if a search committee and screening committee are one in the same. Mr. White responded that the screening committees' job is to review the work that he has done, and then present a complete portfolio of candidates. It would depend on how the Select Board writes their charge.

Mr. Handler noted that the Select Board has not discussed if a screening committee would be of interest to them, but that it is stressed in the proposal and again tonight during discussions. He asked Mr. White if the board is already behind by not having these discussions. Mr. White responded that personally, he has worked with a screening committee on both sides, and he finds them helpful. Generally, you want them to be between 5-7 members with a strong chair that you trust. The screening committee should represent the diverse interests of the community. The candidates also like a screening committee because they are a friendly face and the screening committee likes it because they feel that they are making a difference.

Mr. Handler asked when Mr. White would see the committee first becoming engaged in the process. Mr. White responded between 6-7 weeks.

Of the candidates that Mr. White sees applying for Town Administrator positions, Mr. Handler asked what the average number years of experience is. Mr. White responded that the always likes to give the screening committee an array of candidates that help them understand who they want. Here you are more likely to get someone that has had some success in another place and is looking to make a change or are maybe towards the end of their profession, or possibly at the beginning.

Mr. Howell said that a discussion about the screening committee would be on the next Select Board agenda.

B. Interview Tony Schiavi for consideration of appointment of Interim Town Administrator; votes may be taken

Tony Schiavi was present and said that it is important for the Select Board and the community to know that prior to him getting this request, he was happily retired living in East Harwich. He had been approached a couple of times about interim roles in other communities, but this request is different has it is his hometown where he raised his family. He added that if he can help in a small or big way, he is happy to listen and entertain that, adding that he wants to know what the Select Board is looking for the interim Town Administrator to accomplish.

Mr. Handler thanked Mr. Schiavi for his service and said that his questions and his position have nothing to do with Mr. Schiavi, that his resume and background are wildly impressive. If anyone has been paying attention, Mr. Handler's position on this has been clearly stated. Mr. Schiavi had said that he is looking to bring value to the board and as Mr. Handler sits, the Select Board has not clearly defined what the ask is of the position.

Mr. Handler went on to say that he is confused by the agenda item and whether there would be a vote to appoint tonight. Mr. Howell responded that there can't be a vote unless it says so on the agenda and that there are not set expectations for tonight.

Mr. Handler asked what the expectation is of the incoming Interim Town Administrator or the current, noting that the select Board has not talked about that yet. Mr. Howell responded that this is uncomfortable to have Mr. Schiavi in the room and the board have a conversation that can happen after tonight's meeting. Mr. Howell added that he has made it clear that the morale in the towns workforce is slipping so one job would be to reassemble the team in a way where collegiality is restored. Basically, the work ethic is there but the people are not working in the same director. Mr. Handler asked for more clarity on how we got here and where we are going. Mr. Howell again responded morale.

Mr. Handler asked if it is the board's intention to have more than one candidate come before them. Mr. Howell responded that he would be open to having that discussion after Mr. Schiavi meets with the board but feels that it is unfortunate that Mr. Handler is taking up Mr. Schiavi's time. Mr. Handler said that he hasn't gotten any answers to his questions and referenced an email saying that it was Mr. Piekarski's desire to bring this candidate forward. Mr. Handler is seeking an answer on who is bringing Mr. Schiavi's name forward, if it's the Select Board or Mr. Howell. Mr. Howell responded that he has had conversations with a number of people who might potentially be capable of being an Interim Town Administrator, but he does not have the authority or ability to appoint anyone. That is why Mr. Schiavi is present tonight, to have a discussion with the full board.

Mr. Handler said that he wants to know if it is the boards will to have one candidate and interview them, asking what the plan is and if the position will be advertised. He would like this discussion to be on the next agenda but looks forward to having the conversation with Mr. Schiavi tonight. Mr. Handler closed out by saying that he is having a hard time with this process.

Mr. Howell asked Mr. Schiavi what he would consider a top priority task on day one. Mr. Schiavi responded that some of the direction should come from the Select Board. Absent that, his number one thing would be to quickly be brought up to speed on the town and department heads and hold a department head meeting to introduce himself. As a leader, Mr. Schiavi feels that the most important part of the job is to inspire people and communicate from the top down and the bottom up. People need to know that they are trusted to do their jobs and have accountability. He would like things to run smoothly, efficiently and effectively. A next step would be to sit down with department heads and talk about their departments, being there to help manage the day to day.

Mr. Kelleher asked Mr. Schiavi to talk about an outcome focused budget. Mr. Schiavi thinks that an organization should understand their mission and have objectives and goals so that everyone knows where they are going.

Mr. Schiavi briefly talked about the economic development that he took part in during his time in Ashland.

Ms. Doucette said that she did a lot of reading on his resume and she asked about the citizens engagement that he mentioned. Mr. Schiavi responded that the citizens engagement was making sure that government was connected to people.

Mr. Piekarski confirmed that he has never met or spoke with Mr. Schiavi. He asked how Mr. Schiavi communicates with a 5 member board. Mr. Schiavi responded that typically it would be through email. He would have the board all on a blind copy line and the email would start off with "to the Select Board". He said that it would not be so much of a status report, but more of a line if there are issues or things that the board needs to be made aware of. In one of his first meetings with department heads, he would have a list of 10 critical reporting requirements. The reason for that is to never be surprised. Mr. Schiavi said that he has a lot of experience with risk communication and to never live in silence. He added that he returns every phone call and every email and doesn't leave anyone hanging. He does not want the board to ever feel isolated and added that he is the primary conduit for a lot of things.

Mr. Piekarski asked if Mr. Schiavi has had the opportunity to review the charter. Mr. Schiavi responded that he has read section 4. Mr. Piekarski asked if there is anything in that section that would give him reservation or pause. Mr. Schiavi responded no, that it is just a different construct than what he is used to. For him, the time frame of this process is key and wanted to know if the Select Board had any priorities. Mr. Schiavi said that he is here to assist the Select Board, the staff and the community and has no reservations other than looking at time.

Mr. Piekarski foresees this as a full-time role and the position would fulfill the duties as outlined in the charter.

Mr. Piekarski asked Mr. Schiavi what some of his former town employees and board members would say about him to the Select Board. Mr. Schiavi responded that the 2 boards that he worked with gave him excellent performance evaluations. The leadership piece of the job is engrained in him coming out of the military, adding that he does not shy away from tough tasks.

Mr. Piekarski said that he is a skeptic that 13 weeks will deliver a new Town Administrator. He asked Mr. Schiavi if the process goes beyond 13 weeks, would it impact his availability down the road. Mr. Schiavi responded that to him, shorter is not better. It would depend on if there are major muscle movements that the board needs to have happen. He sees this as a fulltime role and wants to know what the board would like to get out of the interim during the time period.

Mr. Handler said that it is obvious that Mr. Schiavi has created a solid system to operate with. The thing that stood out to him was what Mr. Schiavi accomplished in Ashland.

Mr. Schiavi briefly talked about the Select Board strategic planning retreat.

Mr. Howell thanked Mr. Schiavi for being present tonight.

Mr. Piekarski said that he hears what Mr. Handler is saying tonight and that typically he leans towards seeing and hearing form more people than less. At this point, because we are so far behind, we are 30 days out from hiring an interim and that is too long of a window. Mr. Piekarski said that over the last 2 weeks, he has had the opportunity to reach out to some of Mr. Schiavi's former Select Board members and former employees. The response that Mr. Schiavi gave essentially mirrored what he heard from board members and employees. Mr. Piekarski is not sure that the board will find a more committed and capable candidate for this role. He would be comfortable moving forward with Mr. Schiavi. Mr. Kelleher and Ms. Doucette agreed.

Mr. Howell also said that he understands where Mr. Handler is coming from, but there is nothing in the charter that about how the Select Board designates for this position. Mr. Handler said that he understands the charter and that the Select Board will make the designation. He feels that we are in no emergency right now and that we are in capable hands. Mr. Handler agreed that Mr. Schiavi is a strong candidate and that the board might not find someone better on the outside, but how does the board ensure the town that he is the right candidate without interviewing others. As he has said before, Mr. Handler will do whatever the will of the board is and will work in convert with the board and whoever fills the position. He got used to a process that the board followed for the last 2 years. Mr. Howell had always asked to see all applications and resumes for all positions, and Mr. Handler had agreed with that as vetting anyone who came through the door. He sees the Select Board straying from that process. Mr. Piekarski responded that he sees where Mr. Handler is coming from and said that this is not the process that he would use to fill the permanent position and that clearly we have an outstanding candidate who happens to be a town resident.

Mr. Howell said that he wants to have an assurance that everyone on the Select Board had equal access to the Town Administrator, regardless of if they are on the majority or minority side. Mr. Handler responded that he appreciates that.

**Mr. Piekarski moved to offer Tony Schiavi the position of Interim Town Administrator if agreed upon and to enter into contract negotiations, 2nd by Ms. Doucette and approved 4-1-0 (Handler opposed)**

C. Discussion and vote to appoint a Hearing Officer and to conduct a Public Hearing for alleged entertainment/liquor license violation that occurred on June 20, 2025, at The Lucky Labrador, Inc d/b/a Perks Coffee Shop & Beer Garden, 545 Route 28

Mr. Howell recommended that Acting Town Administrator Meggan Eldredge be designed as hearing officer.

**Ms. Doucette moved to appoint Acting Town Administrator Meggan Eldredge as hearing officer and to conduct a public hearing for alleged entertainment/liquor license violation that occurred on June 20, 2025, at The Lucky Labrador, Inc d/b/a Perks Coffee Shop & Beer Garden, 545 Route 28, 2nd by Mr. Piekarski and approved 5-0-0.**

D. Approve a Change of Manager Application for the Belmont Condominium Beach d/b/a The Beach, 1 Belmont Road

**Mr. Kelleher moved to approve a change of manager application for Belmont Condominium Beach Club d/b/a The Beach, 1 Belmont Road, 2nd by Mr. Piekarski and approved 5-0-0.**

E. Approve a Pledge of Collateral/License Application for Pelham on Earle Operating, LLC d/b/a Pelham on Earle, 30 Earle Road

**Mr. Kelleher moved to approve a pledge of collateral/license application for Pelham on Earle Operating, LLC d/b/a Pelham on Earle, 30 Earle Road, 2nd by Mr. Handler and approved 5-0-0.**

F. Vote to approve a special permit application for a one-day liquor license (wines & malt) for Harwich Cranberry Festival, Inc., event to be held on September 13, 2025, from 11:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and September 14, 2025, from 12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. at 100 Oak Street

**Mr. Kelleher moved to approve a special permit application for a one-day liquor license (wines & malt) for Harwich Cranberry Festival, Inc., event to be held on September 13, 2025, from 11:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and September 14, 2025, from 12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. at 100 Oak Street, 2nd by Mr. Piekarski and approved 5-0-0.**

G. Discussion on Monomoy Regional School District; votes may be taken

Mr. Howell said that the bigger issue is where do we go from here and what does the board want to do to pick this up again.

Mr. Piekarski said that he wants to look at this differently than we have. He would like to get to a motion that the board formally request that the Monomoy Regional School Committee take this matter up and evaluate the entire agreement, especially the funding formula within the agreement. He believes that we have the resources available that we can share with the committee for funding relating to the regional agreement. The school board does not need the approval of the Select Board to open the agreement, which is set to be reviewed every 5 years.

Mr. Handler said that he would support that motion but would like a timeline for it to happen. He is not sure how the Select Board tasks the school committee to act. Mr. Piekarski responded that it is not a task, but a request. Mr. Handler would like to see the request made in a near amount of time.

Mr. Howell suggested that a draft letter be brought to the Select Board for review at their next meeting.

**Mr. Piekarski moved to draft a letter to be signed by the Select Board that will be sent to the Monomoy Regional School Committee requesting that they open and review the regional school agreement in its entirely, especially the funding formula within the document, 2nd by Mr. Handler and approved 5-0-0.**

H. Discussion and possible vote to resubmit the Route 28 Sewer Project for the 2026 State Revolving Fund (SFR) project

Ms. Eldredge reported that the town is in between a rock and a hard place with the Route 28 sewer project dry pipe, adding that we are at the mercy of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT). We have to be under contract for the work in order to get the funding. Staff has been working with Marc Drainville from GHD, who was present remotely at the meeting. Harwich has received an extension for getting under contract until November 30, 2025, however we will lose our principal forgiveness which is around 3.3%. There is the possibility that we will not have someone under contract by November 30th because we are waiting for MassDOT to put their part of the project out to bid. If that is the case, we would lose our IEP standing for what we have now and we would have to self-fund the project next year if it went forward. SRF has contacted the town to indicate that a new SRF funding application can be submitted this month which would potentially get the town a way to fund the project in 2026, but that comes with some risks. We have been told that SRF funding may drop significantly next year due to changes at the federal level and this the chances of getting listed again will be lower than in past years. Also, if the town gets listed for funding, the town will need to go through a new SRF application and approval period which can take several months after the final funding list is issued around March 2026. If the town signs a contract for sewer work after November 30th, the town could end up signing up for work that may not get listed for funding in 2026. And, if listed by SRF for funding, any work that precedes approval by SRF via their application process would not be eligible for funding. It should be noted that the town is not in control of the MassDOT schedule. Ms. Eldredge and Mr. Drainville outlined several scenarios as outlined in the memo provided in the packet.

Mr. Howell said that once MassDOT opens up a road and repaves it, there is a paving moratorium where you cannot open the road for 5 years. That will wind up being an impediment. Mr. Howell asked if anyone has contacted the Cape Cod Commission as they are the ones that vote to disperse the money from the Clean Water Board. Ms. Eldredge responded that MassDEP has been in contact with them and we know that we will be losing our principal forgiveness.

Mr. Drainville said that the Cape and Islands Trust money would be available through November. Mr. Howell responded that the MassDOT is not part of the executive branch and that there is no real leverage there. Mr. Drainville responded that MassDOT is on their own schedule and SRF is becoming stricter with their schedule. Mr. Howell commented that he has heard that the Governor is considering a multimillion-dollar bond issue. Mr. Drainville said that he heard something like that was in the works.

Mr. Piekarski asked if we were to apply for the 2026 SRF, would that automatically kick us out of the 2025 SRF. Mr. Drainville responded that it would not.

Mr. Drainville said that the worst-case scenario is that you commit to the SRF application, and you don't get it. Ms. Eldredge responded that the 2.6-million-dollar price tag would be on the towns hook.

Mr. Kelleher asked if we ever utilize our state representative or state senator and if we haven't, we should reach out to them before giving up.

**Mr. Piekarski moved to resubmit the Route 28 Sewer Project for the 2026 State Revolving Fund (SFR) project, 2nd by Mr. Handler and approved 5-0-0.**

I. Discussion and possible vote to authorize the Chair to sign a Statement of Need for Local Preference letter for the Local Action Units for 203 Bank Street

Harwich Housing Advocate Brianna Powell was present and reviewed what was provided in the packet. This statement would apply to 2 of the 3 housing units being built. The letter of support is required as part of the application.

Richard Waystack was present and said that this is monumental and for those people who talk about development, this letter refers to local preference.

**Mr. Kelleher moved to authorize the Chair to sign a Statement of Need for Local Preference letter for the Local Action Units for 203 Bank Street, 2nd by Mr. Handler and approved 5-0-0.**

J. Discussion and possible vote to authorize the Chair to sign the application and Statement of Need for Local Preference letter for Local Action Units for 5 Bell's Neck

**Mr. Handler moved to authorize the Chair to sign the application and Statement of Need for Local Preference letter for Local Action Units for 5 Bell's Neck, 2nd by Mr. Kelleher and approved 5-0-0.**

Mr. Howell noted that there are certain items on the Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) List that are still preforming as affordable, but a small number of units on Route 28 appear to be slipping off the list. He asked if there have been any discussions with the real estate. Ms. Powell responded that at this time, there doesn't seem to be any interest in retaining those units. Mr. Waystack added that the Board of Assessors has been before the Select Board, and they are closely monitoring the SHI list. They will be back before the Select Board in the next couple of months with relation to that list and any changes that may need to be made.

**OLD BUSINESS**

A. Discussion about reappointing Elizabeth Harder to the Housing Committee; votes may be taken

Elizabeth Harder was present.

Mr. Howell said that there was a disagreement on the decision from the interview committee. Mr. Handler responded that he does not feel that there was a disagreement. Ms. Doucette and Mr. Handler agreed to bring this item back to before the Select Board for a bigger discussion. They did not recommend appointing or not appointing.

Mr. Handler said that the conversation that was had was not easy. Ms. Harder puts a lot of time into the town as a volunteer. Ms. Doucette and Mr. Handler felt that after the meeting, it would be a good idea to bring this back before the full board to hear what happened at the meeting. Ms. Doucette added that this happened because it was taken off of the agenda for appointment and that they thought it would be better to come before the full board.

Ms. Doucette said that she has no questions for Ms. Harder. During the meeting, Ms. Harder stated where she was coming from and apologized. As an elected official, Ms. Harder is held at a higher standard. They did have an extensive conversation at the interview committee level.

Mr. Handler said that there was a statement made by Ms. Harder that prompted this and that there were 2 comments made. He claimed that Ms. Harder made a statement that she is avoiding going to certain meetings because she cannot control her emotions. There was a request made from the Zoning Board of Appeals for her to attend a meeting and Ms. Harder chose not to go because she might not be able to hold her tongue. Ms. Harder said that she did not recall making those statements. She recalled saying that she did not go to the following ZBA meeting that she was asked to attend because of the people that were upset with her and she felt that it was better to remove herself from the situation. Mr. Handler responded that he thought Ms. Harder had said that she was going to think long and hard about attending certain meetings that would be uncomfortable to attend.

Richard Waystack was present and thinks that it is important that if someone is elected or appointed, that they respect the residents of the community. He was the victim of the applicant for housing and was accused of being a greedy landlord. Mr. Waystack said that he was never apologized to publicly. He feels that it is important for the Select Board to think carefully about who they bring on to these committees. They should be respected but also should respect every member of the community, whether they agree or not.

Housing Committee member Art Bodin was present. He stated that he is also on the Housing Authority and is a housing advocate. There are a few contentious issues in town, with housing being one of them. He has been to several meetings on housing and there are a lot of advocates out there, as well as a lot of people against housing. Mr. Bodin commented that everyone committee in town has vacancies, including the Housing Committee. He feels that Ms. Harder is very passionate about what she does and does a lot with housing. Sometimes when you are passionate it is hard not to embrace the person around you that is against you. It is not always easy to take the high road.

Mr. Howell said that he and Ms. Harder have known each other for a lot of years. They have had talks about her trying to tone down her feelings in public. Ms. Harder did apologize to him and the public. He agreed with Mr. Bodin that there is a lack of people that the town can appoint to a committee, but that doesn't mean that people should be subject to things as well.

Ms. Harder said that if Mr. Waystack wants a personal apology for what he took as insulting, then she apologizes for what she said. She did not mean her comment to represent him. Ms. Harder said that when she does get passionate, her words come out before her head. She did not mean that Mr. Waystack was part of the problem.

Mr. Howell stated that there is a continued expectation for everyone who gets appointed and that you should treat everyone as you would want to be treated. Ms. Harder promised to do that and added that she is not perfect, but that she does her best and will continue to do her best.

Mr. Piekarski noted that Mr. Handler had mentioned 2 comments in the beginning of the discussion. Mr. Handler responded that at the request of the Chair, he will not bring up the second comment. Mr. Piekarski added that respect is a must whether a person is elected or appointed, and that begins with the Select Board and resonates to every other board and committee within the community. Ms. Doucette added that whether you are staff, appointed or elected, you are representing the town and people and that sometimes you have to listen and hear what people have to say without voicing an opinion.

**Ms. Doucette moved to reappoint Elizabeth Harder to the Housing Committee for a term to expire on June 30, 2028, 2nd by Mr. Kelleher and approved 3-2-0 (Piekarski & Handler opposed).**

**<u>CONTRACTS</u>**

A. Approve a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone (SHINE) Program and vote to authorize the Chair to sign

**Mr. Piekarski moved to approve a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone (SHINE) Program and vote to authorize the Chair to sign, 2nd by Mr. Handler and approved 5-0-0.**

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Ms. Eldredge outlined the contracts as provided in the packet.

Mr. Piekarski asked if the red lined areas in the street at the top of Bank Street could evaluated.

Mr. Howell noted that there was a discussion about the possible addition of 2 parking spaces in front of the Pilgrim Lodge. Ms. Eldredge responded that is covered under the scope of services for the contract.

Ms. Eldredge reported that she has recommended Conservation Administrator Amy Usowski for appointment as the Town's representative to the Barnstable County Coastal Resources Committee, effective upon approval and serving through January 31, 2028. She also recommended Director of Natural Resources Stephanie Sykes to serve as the towns alternate representative during the same term.

Ms. Eldredge reviewed the letter as provided in the packet from CBIZ CPAs P.C. This document is not our audit, but a statement that they have received all of our information and have not found any fraudulent activity.

## SELECT BOARD MEMBER REPORT

Mr. Kelleher reported that he attended a meeting of the Cemetery Commission and that they do a lot of good work. He also gave a shout out to the East Harwich Union Cemtery fence replacement and the Eagle Scout whose project this was.

Mr. Kelleher said that the Finance Committee is working on a proposal to bring before the Select Board regarding bringing on and retaining public safety employees.

Mr. Handler noted that the board did make a strong promise to the Finance Committee that we would review the revolving funds. He asked the Finance Committee liaison to reach out to them to begin the process. Mr. Howell responded that he is hoping for the 3rd or 4th week in August to have a joint meet with the board, Finance Committee and Capital Outlay Committee to map out how to move forward.

Mr. Handler said that he drove along Seth Whitefield Road and Raptor Road and found that the road cut is perfect. The DPW did a great job and did not encroach. The road was a nice smooth ride and easily passible.

Mr. Howell reminded the public again about the Cape Verdean festival happening this Saturday.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Mr. Piekarski moved to adjourn the meeting of the Select Board at 9:18 p.m., 2nd by Mr. Kelleher and approved 5-0-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Clarke
Executive Assistant